

## Message Text

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14

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06

SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 PA-01 PRS-01

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P 020913Z MAR 76

FM AMCONSUL BOMBAY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6213

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG IN

SUBJECT: POWER SUPPLY IN MAHARASHTRA AND GUJARAT

REF: BOMBAY 0493

1. R.S.VERMA OF THE INDIAN ATOMIC POWER AUTHORITY HAS INFORMED THE CONSULATE GENERAL THAT ONE OF THE TWIN 200MW POWER REACTORS AT TARAPUR HAS BEEN SHUT DOWN FOR REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE AND WILL REMAIN OUT OF SERVICE FOR THREE TO FOUR WEEKS. ALMOST CERTAINLY THIS OPERATION INVOLVES SOME RECHARGING AND/OR RELOADING OF FUEL ELEMENTS, BUT VERMA DID NOT SAY SO.

2. NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS OF GUJARAT POWER SHORTAGES THUS FAR (FINANCIAL EXPRESS AND ECONOMIC TIMES FEB 26) UNDERPLAY TARAPUR ROLE AS CAUSE OF POWER RESTRICTIONS REPORTED REFTTEL, IN GUJARAT. THEY IMPLY THAT TOTAL SHORTFALL OF ABOUT 100SMW IS AT PRESENT ACCOUNTED FOR TO EXTENT OF ONLY 35 PER CENT BY TARAPUR, WHEREAS ACTUALLY HALF OF TARAPUR'S POWER IS EARMARKED FOR GUJARAT STATE, SO LOSS REALLY RANGES BETWEEN 75 AND 95MW.

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3. AS INDICATED REFTTEL, MAHARASHTRA STATE THEORETICALLY HAS A FAIR AMOUNT OF EXCESS GENERATING CAPACITY AS PEAK DEMAND IN THE STATE IS NOW ESTIMATED AT 1900MW WHILE TOTAL CAPACITY IS NOW ESTIMATED AT 2300MW, BUT THAT AMOUNT HAS NEVER BEEN ON-LINE IN LAST FEW YEARS. EFFECTIVE PEAK CAPACITY IS PROBABLY NEARER 2,00MW. SINCE THE INTER-STATE AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF TARAPUR POWER CALLS FOR 50/50 SPLIT, EACH STATE WILL NOW BE ABLE TO DRAW BETWEEN 75 AND 95MW FROM TARAPUR DEPENDING ON LEVEL OF OPERATION OF THE UNIT REMAINING IN PRODUCTION. CONGEN IS NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THE UNIT WHICH SETHNA TOLD US TWO WEEKS AGO WAS PRODUCING AT 1160MW HAS BEEN SHUT DOWN OR WHETHER THE ONE PRODUCING NEAR CAPACITY OF 190MW IS NOW OUT OF PRODUCTION. IN ANY CASE, WHEN AVAILABLE CAPACITY IN MAHARASHTRA DROPPED TO 1700MW IN DEC, THE STATE WAS SUBJECT TO VERY SEVERE RESTRICTIONS AND THIS COULD WELL ARISE AGAIN AS WATER LEVELS IN THE HYDRO DAMS DROP AS THE DRY SEASON PROGRESSES DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS PRECEDING THE JUNE MONSOON RAINS.

4. WHILE THE CURRENT SHUTDOWN OF TARAPUR MAY BE CONSIDERED TO BE "NORMAL", FURTHER DELAY IN SUPPLYING FUEL FROM THE US FOR THE TARAPUR REACTORS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY EVENTUALLY BE BLAMED BY LOCAL PRESS FOR THE ELECTRICITY SHORTAGES. SETHNA COULD, OF COURSE, COUNTER THIS CRITICISM BY MAKING CLEAR THAT THE CURRENT SHUTDOWN DOWNS NOT RESULT FROM OUR FAILURE TO SUPPLY FUEL ON SCHEDULE. HOWEVER, UNLESS HE GETS ASSURANCE THAT THE DELAYED SHIPMENTS OF FUEL WILL BE QUICKLY ENROUTE, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT HE WOULD DARE ISSE SUCH A CLARIFICATION EVEN IF HE SHOULD DESIRE TO DO SO IN FURTHERANCE OF HIS OFTEN STATED POLICY OF DOING ALL POSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE AND EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US IN NUCLEAR AFFAIRS. POWER SHORTAGES ARE A SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUE IN WEST INDIA.  
COURTNEY

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## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 02 MAR 1976  
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